

VZCZCXYZ0002  
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBO #0533 0422312  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 112312Z FEB 08  
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1279  
INFO RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 8042  
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 9946  
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA PRIORITY 5900  
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY 1225  
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO PRIORITY 6548  
RUEHGL/AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL PRIORITY 4289  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 000533

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/05/2017  
TAGS: [KTIA](#) [MARR](#) [PREF](#) [PREL](#) [SNAR](#) [MOPPS](#) [CO](#)  
SUBJECT: EMBASSY SUPPORTS SOUTHCOM RECOMMENDATION OF  
PALANQUERO FOR COOPERATIVE SECURITY LOCATION (CSL)

REF: A. 07 BOGOTA 6988  
[1](#)B. 07 BOGOTA 7987

Classified By: Ambassador William R. Brownfield - Reasons 1.4 (b, d)

[1](#)1. (U) This is an action request. See paragraph 5.

[1](#)2. (C) Summary. Embassy concurs with the U.S. Southcom recommendation that Palanquero Air Base represents the best location for a possible Cooperative Security Location (CSL) in Colombia. We request that the Department expedite approval for renewed security assistance for Colombian Air Force Units at Palanquero, and authorize us to seek official GOC concurrence with the Palanquero CSL proposal. End summary.

[1](#)3. (C) In October 2007, a U.S. Southcom team visited Colombia to assess potential sites for a CSL. The team focused on the commercial airport in Barranquilla and the German Olano Air Base (Palanquero) in Cundinamarca department. The team concluded that Palanquero is "from a military perspective, without question the best location to conduct full spectrum U.S. military and interagency operations." The facility's runway is in excellent condition; the location is secure with minimal force protection concerns; it has excellent support and logistical facilities including a reliable fuel supply; and the site would require only modest infrastructure improvements for long-term U.S. use.

[1](#)4. (C) Palanquero hosts the Colombian Air Force's Air Combat Command -1 (CACOM-1), which the Department suspended from receiving U.S. security assistance in January, 2003, due to the Air Force's refusal to provide a credible account of the CACOM-1's bombing of the village of Santo Domingo on December 13, 1998 (reftels). The incident left 17 civilians dead. After the manslaughter conviction of two pilots and a technician in the Santo Domingo case in September, 2007, Embassy requested that the Department lift the suspension (Ref A) on assistance to CACOM-1 and Palanquero.

[1](#)5. (C) The Embassy endorses the Southcom technical assessment that Palanquero represents the best site for a CSL. We request that the Department review and lift remaining restrictions on CACOM-1 per Ref A. Embassy also requests that Department authorize it to approach the GOC to seek official concurrence on the Palanquero CSL proposal.

Brownfield